



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

2019 Winter Conference

We're seeking innovative and enthusiastic presenters for our 2019 Winter Conference. The conference will be held February 6th through 9th, 2019 in Lancaster, PA at the Lancaster County Convention Center.

Our annual winter conference, now in its 28th year, draws thousands of farmers, homesteaders, educators, and agriculture and food system professionals for four days of intensive learning on more than 120 sustainable food and farming programs.

Our overarching **goals** for the winter conference are to:

- Provide training and education that will promote the environmental, economic, and social wellbeing of farms, the food system, communities, and the environment.
- Serve as an outlet for sharing cutting-edge research and science-based solutions, while preserving and passing on traditional farming knowledge and heritage.
- Be a venue where people, businesses, and organizations from across the sustainable agriculture movement make meaningful connections.
- Embrace an inclusive definition of sustainability, which accepts a diversity of methods and philosophies of production.

Selection Process & Timeline

Deadline for proposals: August 6th

We will evaluate proposals periodically throughout the RFP window, and may be in touch prior to the final notification of proposal status.

Final notification of proposal status: September 14th

Note: We confirm full- and half-day programs earlier than shorter sessions, so consider proposing longer programs well before the deadline.

We work with a volunteer committee to assemble conference programming that reflects and meets the needs of our diverse audiences. We evaluate proposals using the following criteria:

- Consistency with our organizational mission to build a more economically-just, environmentally-regenerative, and community-focused food system
- Alignment with our conference goals (outlined above)
- Expertise and experience of presenter(s)
- Relevance of topic to our audience

You're welcome to contact us for feedback on your ideas prior to submission. Please contact Kristin Hoy at kristin@pasafarming.org or 814-349-9856 x11.

Lengths of Programs

We offer several lengths of programming. The full day of programming, which is seven hours, will be scheduled on Wednesday only. The rest of the programs will be scheduled over Thursday to Saturday.

Seven hours: The full-day programs should focus on a specific topic, and use the time to teach attendees a skill or technique that will help them to improve their farming operation. The agenda can include one or multiple presenters; however, we prefer to have no more than four. *The proposal will require a draft agenda. We will schedule three to six programs, on Wednesday only, at this year's conference.*

Two and a quarter or three hours: The half-day programs (2.25 or 3 hours) should take an in-depth look at a specific topic. Tracks can include one or multiple presenters; however, we prefer to have no more than three. *The proposal will require a draft agenda.*

90 minutes: The majority of our programs will be 90 minutes, which allows time either to provide an overview of a broad topic, or a focus on a very narrow subject. These are a good format for lectures, panel discussions, and facilitated group work. They also work well for a short presentation combined with other formats. They typically include one to two presenters. For panel discussions, we prefer to limit it to three presenters (in some cases, a pair of speakers can count as one presenter), plus a moderator.

45 or 60 minutes: This length of program is well suited to inspirational high level lectures, Q & As, discussions, or longer demonstrations. They work well for interactive programs like learning circles or discussion groups.

30 minutes: New this year, we will schedule short talks and demonstrations in the trade show. This format can be used to provide industry updates and product demonstrations. Sponsors in particular are encouraged to offer program proposals for this format.

Conference Audiences

Approximately 50 percent of conference attendees are current farmers, and over 85 percent grow agricultural products in some way. Considering this, we strive to focus most of the conference programming on farm production, business, and marketing topics; however, we also seek to cover a broad range of issues relevant to the sustainable agriculture movement.

We are seeking a variety of programs that meet the needs and interests of the following groups:

- Experienced Farmers
- Aspiring & Beginning Farmers
- Homesteaders & Gardeners
- Agriculture & Food System Professionals
- Sustainable Food System Advocates

We will organize our programming under the following **themes**:

- Production practices
- Processing and value-adding
- Healthy farms, communities, and landscapes
- Policy, advocacy, and food system issues
- Business and marketing

Compensation

As a non-profit education organization, we try to stretch our budget as far as possible to maximize the impact of our program. We also understand that some speakers may need additional support to participate in our conference. You will have the opportunity on the proposal to share your needs. Below are some guidelines around compensation.

- We are happy to offer **complimentary registration** to our speakers for as much of the conference as you would like to attend. Lunch and free parking is provided the day you speak.
- For speakers **who travel more than 50 miles one way**, we will consider requests to cover travel costs. We can also provide one night in a shared room, or half-off a night in a private room, per day of speaking. *Please note that we cannot provide this support for speakers who will attend with a sponsoring company. We can arrange lodging and a roommate, if that is preferred.*
- **Limited funding is available to cover speaker requests beyond our standard compensation.** We are a nonprofit, charitable organization supported by our members, and we ask presenters to consider this when making requests. We are willing to consider non-traditional requests. Waived speaker costs can be included as part of in-kind support. Please be specific in your requests.

Submission Instructions

Please submit your proposal using our online form. You will be able to save your progress in the form. Upon submission, the primary contact will receive a copy of the responses.

To submit multiple proposals, you will need to complete the form once for each submission.

**The form is available at:
pasafarming.org/conferencerfp**



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